



Dear Parents and Carers

6th July 2026

At Ormiston Denes Academy We are committed to creating an environment where every student can flourish. As young people navigate an increasingly connected world, they face a unique blend of opportunities and challenges both online and offline.

To support their wellbeing, learning and personal development, **we will become a phone-free academy from 3 September 2026**. All students joining our school will use Yondr pouches to securely store their phones throughout the school day.

This change is not simply about reducing screen time. It is about creating the conditions for students to be fully present, engaging meaningfully with their learning, developing stronger relationships with their peers, and enjoying the space to think, reflect and grow.

For over a decade, Yondr has supported schools in more than 40 countries to build healthier, more engaging school cultures. Their pouch-based program, combined with hands-on guidance and dedicated support, has led to powerful results:

- 86% reported improved safety and student wellbeing
- 84% saw increased engagement in class
- 44% reduced behavioural referrals

How the Programme Works

Each student will be assigned a Yondr pouch - a secure, lockable case for storing personal devices. Students are responsible for bringing their pouch to and from school each day and keeping it in good condition.

- **Upon arrival:** Students power off all smart technology, placing all devices in the pouch, and lock it in front of a teacher.
- **During the day:** Students keep the locked pouch in their bag.
- **At dismissal:** Students unlock pouches at designated stations to retrieve their devices. The phone is taken home by the student ready for the next school day.

This process is quick, simple, and will be supervised by staff as part of our daily routine.

Staying Connected

With student safety as our top priority, we will follow our standard safety protocols in the event of an emergency. If you need to reach your child during the school day, please contact our main office at 01502 574474.

We're here to support a smooth transition for your family. If you have any further questions, please contact us.

Thank you for your continued support as we work together to create a focused, present, and positive school environment for every student.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs K Williams
Principal

Frequently Asked Questions

Morning and Afternoon Procedures

How quick is the unlocking process?

The unlocking process is quick, and students typically do not need to break stride. While students are getting used to unlocking pouches, staff will be on hand with mobile unlocking stations to stop queues forming in the first few weeks. Additional stations will be added if required.

What if my child arrives late or needs to be dismissed early?

The main office will have an unlocking device for students arriving late or leaving early.

Will my child's phone be safe?

Students are in possession of their phone - in their Yondr pouch - for the entire school day. We will advise students to store the pouch safely in their bags. While the Yondr pouch will provide some protection, it's not a protective case, so students should continue to handle their phones care.

What happens if a student forgets to open their pouch at the end of the day?

In Yondr's experience, this rarely happens. All students funnel past the unlocking stations at exit points and typically want their phones back. If a student arrives home with their phone still in the pouch, they can either return to school to unlock it or enjoy a phone-free evening.

What happens if a student forgets to bring in their pouch?

The student's phone will be collected and securely stored in the school office until the end of the day. Parents/carers will be contacted and reminded of the procedures. If the pouch is repeatedly forgotten, it will be treated as lost and a possible replacement fee of £15 will be charged. We suggest students keep pouches in their school bags, and they remain locked when they are not in use.

Daily Pouch Use

What if my child needs their phone for medical reasons?

We have an alternative solution for the small number of students who require their phones for medical reasons (e.g. diabetes and medical shunts). We will be in touch with these families if they have informed us of their medical condition.

My child currently doesn't bring a phone to school; how will this work for them?

Please send an email to Kosborn@ormistonden.co.uk and we will advise on next steps.

What happens if a phone is seen outside of a pouch?

If a student is found in possession of a phone **outside their pouch** on school site, the phone will be confiscated and returned when a parent/guardian picks it up from the school site alongside a possible escalation of consequences. If this is repeated, then you will be required to attend a meeting to help support your child with this process.

Bag searches may be conducted if staff have concerns that a student has a mobile phone on them that hasn't been placed into their pouch.

What if the Yondr pouch gets damaged?

Any attempt to tamper with the Yondr system, including use or possession of high-strength magnets will be treated as a **serious offence**, potentially resulting in a replacement fee of £15, confiscation of the device until collected by a parent, and possible Internal Isolation or suspension.

If accidental damage occurs, students must report it immediately. If damage is discovered during checks and has not been reported, it may be considered **intentional**. Students will be provided with guidelines to lock their pouch when they leave school to avoid any accidental damage.

The pouch should not be used as a replacement for a protective case and/or screen protector on a mobile device.

We will be conducting random pouch/spot checks over the full academic year to assess the condition of the pouches.

Emergencies

What if there is a school emergency?

In an emergency, the priority is for students to follow school safety procedures under staff guidance.

Unauthorised phone use during such situations may:

- Delay emergency responses
- Spread misinformation
- Put students and staff at increased risk
- Disrupt coordinated safeguarding efforts

Emergency communications will be managed through the school.